

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 1 to 11 are presented for the Examiner's consideration in view of the following comments.

Claims 1-4, 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,053,941 issued May 30, 2006 to Ohashi (*Ohashi*). Applicant has amended claim 1.

Applicant's claimed invention is directed to a method for correcting differences in the characteristics of readout channels of adjacent segments of an image sensor. In particular, claim 1 requires estimating a pixel value spatially located behind a respective boundary between two segments from pixel values actually taken by the segment before the boundary. For example, see Applicant's specification, FIG. 2, and the associated description. Claim 1 further requires that a correction value be derived from differences between the at least one estimated value and an actual value of at least one pixel spatially located at the position of the at least one estimated pixel that lies behind the boundary in the neighboring segment. As such, Applicant's claimed invention advantageously makes use of the finding that real-life images very seldom have step-like changes in brightness but rather exhibit changes in brightness having a fine gradation (e.g., see Applicant's specification, p. 7, ln. 5).

In contrast to Applicant's claimed invention, *Ohashi* describes selecting one reference pixel at a first spatial location close to the border between two segments and determining the differences between the reference pixel at the first spatial location and pixels to be corrected at second, third and fourth spatial locations, respectively. *Ohashi*, col. 7, ln. 22 and following. In other words, the reference pixel of *Ohashi* always corresponds to an actual value, and the reference pixel and the pixels that are to be corrected are not spatially coinciding as required by Applicant's claim 1.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over *Ohashi*. As such, dependent claims 2-4, 9 and 10 are also in condition for allowance.

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Turning now to claims 5-8 and 11, these claims have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicant respectfully submits that the basis of this rejection has been removed in view of Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1.

As it is believed that all of the objections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Applicant's attorney in order to overcome any additional objections that the Examiner might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 07-0832 therefor.

Respectfully submitted
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on:

2-13-07
Date

Karen Schuchman